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near Rio Janeiro. It is evidently from this source that much of the soil and fine material of the drift of Iowa and Minnesota are derived. New England did not derive such a soil from her granites, although they contain all the elements of good soil, because their texture did not allow of their ready disintegration, while the glaciers were passing over them, as those of Minnesota did. Thus the great superiority of the soil of the North-west over that of New England, is due to the fact that the rocks of the whole region—granites, sandstones and limestones—were more easily disintegrated and ground.—C. A. WHITE.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. C. F., Eastham, Mass.—The "silver witches," which you say is the common name for them with you, is probably the *Lepisma saccharina* Linn. It is found in damp houses, in closets, among books, and is injurious to silks and silken tapestry, we are informed by a lady living in Salem. You write "that they seem to choose the darkness, and move from one room to another by night. A wicker basket, that had been laid aside for some time, was found to contain quite a population of them. Hundreds were scalded out of it. I send one or two pieces from the basket, showing their work." We are surprised to find the *Lepisma* accused of doing damage by boring into wood-work, not suspecting an insect, with such a flattened and weak body, capable of boring cylindrical holes in soft wood, though it has powerful jaws.

Portsmouth, N. H.—In answer to your query whether the Greenland Saxifraga is a variety of *S. Pensylvanica*, we would say that we cannot guess at Greenland or any other Saxifrages (or any other plants at all for that matter); there are too many of them to make it a profitable employment.

L. A. M., Glen Falls, N. Y.—The caterpillars are the young of *Papilio Asterias*, the Parsnip Butterfly. The v-shaped horns thrown out from behind the head, are supposed to be organs of protection.

L. B. C., Richmond, Ind., writes that "on Monday, the 27th of April, 1868, the children found a Luna-moth (*Tropæa Luna*) under a beech tree. They brought it in, and I placed it under a glass disk, with beach, maple, and currant leaves, neither of which, however, did it eat; but on Thursday night, April 30th, it broke the point off from one of its wings, and eat it up. Friday night, May 1st, it broke off the other point and commenced devouring it, but I soon found it at its work of self-destruction and killed it. During its captivity of five days, it eat none of the leaves placed in its prison fresh, and when I killed it, it appeared as active as though it had a plenty of its favorite food. Is it natural for them to destroy themselves if kept in confinement? Or was it for want of its natural food? And what is its natural food?"

The Luna and other moths of the Silk-worm family (*Bombycidae*) do not eat or take food except in the larva state, as the mouth-parts (tongue and mandibles) are aborted. Nearly all moths suck in the nectar of flowers and other sweets, but never use their jaws, which are obsolete, though well developed in the caterpillar. Did not your Luna break off her tail, and did not the fragment disappear in some other way than down her throat, which in the winged state is not adapted for swallowing, as she only lives long enough to go through a brief courtship and lay her eggs for her future progeny, taking no food during the few days of her moth-hood. The caterpillar feeds on the maple and other trees.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Observations on the Metamorphosis of Siredon into Amblystoma. By Prof. O. C. Marsh. With a plate. New Haven, 1868. 8vo, pp. 12.

Outlines of Comparative Anatomy and Medical Zoölogy. By Harrison Allen, M. D. Philadelphia, 1869. 8vo, pp. 190.

The Canadian Entomologist. Vol. I, No. 4. November, 1868.

The Field. October 3 to November 21. London.

Synopsis of the Birds of South Carolina. By Elliott Coues, M. D. Boston, 1868. 8vo, pp. 23.

American Bee Journal. December, 1868. Washington, D. C.

Report on the Trials of Plows, held at Utica. Albany, 1868. 8vo.

Land and Water. August 8 to October 31, 1868. London.

Some Recent Additions to the Fauna of California. By J. G. Cooper, M. D. (From the Proceedings of the California Academy of Science, January, 1868.) 8vo, pp. 11.

Cosmos. October 3 to November 14, 1868. Paris.